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ABSTRACT

The Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools is a partnership among teachers, students, parents, administrators, and business leaders with the common purpose of restoring the Boston Public School System to its former position as a national leader in education. This publication examines the programs and activities, school by school, that were funded by The Boston Plan for Excellence during academic year 1992-1993. The programs provide students with academic, financial, and personal support. Several specific programs are highlighted. In kindergarten through third grade, the Support for Early Educational Development (SEED) Program, created in 1987, is designed to foster excitement about learning and the value of education. During the middle school years, the Hancock Endowment for Academics, Recreation, and Teaching (HEART) program provides grants for academics and innovative projects which enhance the academic curriculum, provide student leadership opportunities, and encourage staff development and parent involvement. Project Action enables high school students to become grantmakers in their own communities. Finally, the Access Program helps high school seniors find the money to pay for college as well as last minute scholarship financing that attempts to make up the difference between the actual cost of college and what a student has been able to raise from other sources of financial aid. (GLR)

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ED 366 690

1993

THE BOSTON PLAN FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Venture Capital For Educators II

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FOREWORD

The Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools is a partnership among teachers, students, parents, administrators and business leaders with the common purpose of restoring the Boston Public School System to its former position as a national leader in education.

Created in 1984 with a $1.5 million endowment from Bank of Boston, The Boston Plan was one of the first community-based endowments for public education in the United States. Contributions help to fund innovative educational ideas, creating programs for students in kindergarten through high school and beyond through the undergraduate years.

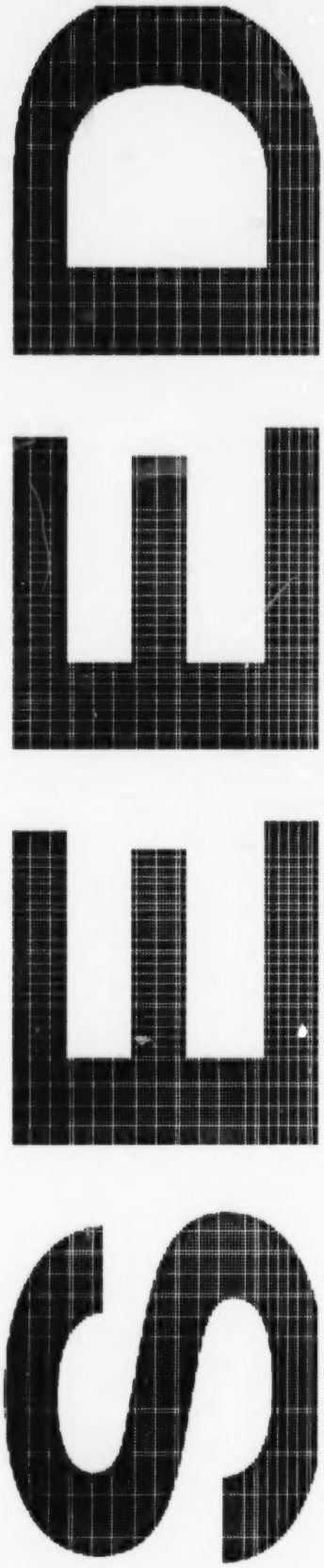
The Mission of The Boston Plan is fairly straightforward: to support innovations and improvements in public schools; to expand opportunities for students through the disbursement of private funds; and to strengthen the base of community support for the public schools by promoting greater awareness and understanding of their importance. Also, The Boston Plan for Excellence advocates for children in the public policy arena.

The Boston Plan for Excellence and its programs have received wide financial support from the corporate and foundation communities. In addition to the founding gift, the Bank of Boston has become a national model for corporate philanthropy through their involvement in public education and in the lives of Boston school children. Bank of Boston has contributed over $10 million to the Boston Plan, establishing a healthy operations endowment, and providing for additional programmatic initiatives. Other substantial grants have come from The New England, John Hancock Financial Services, the law firm of Goodwin, Procter & Hoar, The Boston Foundation, and American Student Assistance Corporation (formerly Massachusetts Higher Education Assistance Corporation). These gifts plus contributions from some 75 other private sources have helped to endow programs and provide for ongoing operations.

The programs of The Boston Plan for Excellence provide students with academic, financial, and personal support. In the early childhood years, kindergarten through third grade, the SEED Program fosters an excitement about learning and about the value of education. The Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program enables elementary and high school teachers to give students the self-confidence and the motivation to succeed in school, college and the work force. During the middle school years, the HEART Program provides grants for academic and innovative project opportunities which enhance the academic curriculum, provide student leadership opportunities, and encourages staff development and parent involvement. Project ACTION enables high school students to become grantmakers in their own communities. Finally, the ACCESS Program helps high school seniors find the money to pay for college. It provides, within guidelines, the all-important "last dollar" scholarships that attempt to make up the difference between the actual cost of college, and what a student has been able to raise from other sources of financial aid. ACCESS provides ongoing financial and moral support for the four to six years it takes to complete college.

This publication is a look at the programs and activities funded by The Boston Plan for Excellence during academic year 1992 - 1993. It is our hope that by sharing these innovative projects and ideas that the programs will be disseminated through the Boston Public School System and beyond. Every program described in this publication provides creative opportunities to experiment within public schools and is replicable in other settings.

To get more information about The Boston Plan for Excellence, please contact us at One Boston Place, Suite 2400, Boston, MA 02108 (617-723-7489).



SEED GRANTS

Support for Early Educational Development

Supported by the law firm of Goodwin, Procter & Hoar

SEED was created in 1987 by the partners of the law firm of Goodwin, Procter & Hoar in recognition of the firm's 75th anniversary. This $1 million permanent endowment fund represents an important response from a member of the business sector to the challenges society has posed to public education and the Boston community.

SEED has been designed to address the critical needs of early childhood education by creating supportive, nurturing, and challenging environments in which students from kindergarten through grade three can learn. SEED projects are awarded on two year implementation cycles to insure a serious time commitment on behalf the schools. The awards are substantial and are considered to be "research and development" grants. From 1988 to 1990, SEED awarded a total of $150,000 to the Agassiz and Trotter Elementary Schools to implement whole language programs. The SEED schools for 1990 through 1992 were the Quincy Elementary School and the Condon Elementary School. The two schools were awarded over $114,000 to implement whole language and cooperative learning projects. The current SEED grant recipients are the Condon Elementary School and the Hurley Elementary School. The grants awarded to these schools will total $120,000 over two years.

Robert B. Fraser, Chairman, Goodwin, Procter & Hoar stated about his firm creating the SEED program, "There was a clear and obvious gap. You have to get to the students early enough with some good programs if you want to make a difference. Pretty early on we made a judgment that we wanted to have a serious experimental program. You need to take risks and if something works better, fine. And if it does work better, there should be a program for disseminating it."

Since its inception, SEED has awarded over $350,000 to encourage innovation in the Boston Public Schools. Applications for the next round of SEED grants will be available in November, 1993. The programs will begin in September, 1994.

SEED

James Condon Elementary School

FY 93 - $30,000

Principal:

Daniel Walsh

Project Director:

Michael Sitar

Target population:

600 Students

Early Childhood Integration Through the Arts

In an effort to enhance the Condon School's mainstreaming efforts between the Children's Center, a group of classes which serves young children with severe physical and mental disabilities, and early childhood classrooms, the Early Childhood Integration Through the Arts program was developed. The project was designed with the main focus of integrating all early childhood students, ages 3 - 8, with and without special needs into the Condon School community. Through weekly activities in visual arts, movement/dance and music, the program provides extensive training for school specialists, teachers and parents in the areas of arts and education and its support of integration. All early childhood students at the Condon School are provided with avenues for creative expression, multi-sensory learning and development of decision making skills. By using the arts a variety of learning styles are being addressed, and children are experiencing learning through all the senses. School specialists and the classroom teachers are working together in a collaborative effort.

Very Special Arts Massachusetts (VSAM) acts as the major partner in the planning and implementation of the project. They coordinate the artist/consultants and train the Condon School specialists. Integration opportunities are being provided throughout the school year in two different ways. Special education students in substantially separate classrooms are integrated into the arts, music and physical education classes. Artists from VSAM collaborate with the Condon school personnel to provide cooperative arts experiences for the mainstream population and the special needs children in these classes. The second way integration opportunities are being created is through reverse mainstreaming activities. These activities focus on disability awareness and arts activities and are lead by the special needs teachers, assisted by the paraprofessionals.

Artists from VSAM create most of the mainstreaming opportunities which provide a living resource and direct training the Condon School personnel. They work closely with the three specialists normally responsible for art, music and physical education classes. VSAM also provides teacher training in the Multi-Arts Resource Guide, a permanent resource for teachers, specialists and parents in using arts as a vehicle for learning.

In assessing the first year of the program, Project Director Mike Sitar wrote, "There has been astounding growth in the emotional and social development of the mainstream population. As a result of their exposure in the integrated groups and in the special needs classrooms, they are more responsive to the special needs students and have welcomed them into the school community. They have grown in the knowledge of disabled people and have developed a greater sense of empathy and understanding."

The project will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a $30,000 grant from the SEED program.

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SEED

Joseph J. Hurley Elementary School

FY 93 - $30,000

Principal:

Miriam Hernandez-Spurlark

Project Director:

Virginia Zanger

Target population:

250 students

Project Hands-On! is an inclusionsary hands-on science program designed to excite students about doing science together. The project features bi-weekly science classes in grades K-3 in integrated groups of bilingual, monolingual, and special education program students. Students explore science topics using the nationally acclaimed Hands-On Elementary Science curriculum.

Some of the specific objectives for the program are: to have all students in grades K-3 spend at least 90 minutes per week learning in an integrated setting; to have a minimum of 3 parents per grade level assist in classrooms during the program; to train K-3 teachers in cooperative learning and hands-on science; to have students and staff work together to create a school environment which reflects the multicultural focus of the school community.

Curricula have been linguistically adapted for two-way bilingual classes. Some science classes are taught in Spanish and some in English to a mixed class of students. Kindergarten through third grade classes participate in multicultural units based on Children's Museum kits and the Children's Museum Summer Institute in Multicultural Education training (5 teachers attended). All K-3 teachers receive training in cooperative learning and science, including hands-on lessons modeled in many Hurley School classrooms by science consultants. Also, after-school science workshops with science instruction from Wheelock College are held. Parents assist in science classrooms throughout the year by working in small groups, providing translation assistance, and helping with science equipment.

Project Director Virginia Zanger created a Hands-On Science newsletter to keep everyone updated on the project's progress. It includes project descriptions, parent interviews, and updates on each grade's activities in both English and Spanish. She has also outlined an extensive two-year research plan to evaluate the project.

The Hurley School was able to receive many other significant donations as a direct result of the success of Hands-On! For example, Impact II Vecinos grants were awarded to 11 Hurley teachers to complement team-based science instruction. A grant from the Commonwealth Inservice Institute of the Massachusetts Department of Education allowed the school to extend cooperative learning training and order science-related books in English and Spanish. The Christian Science Monitor Publications donated several thousand dollars worth of children's trade books with science themes.

Hands-On! continues in academic year 1993-1994 with a $30,000 grant from the SEED program.

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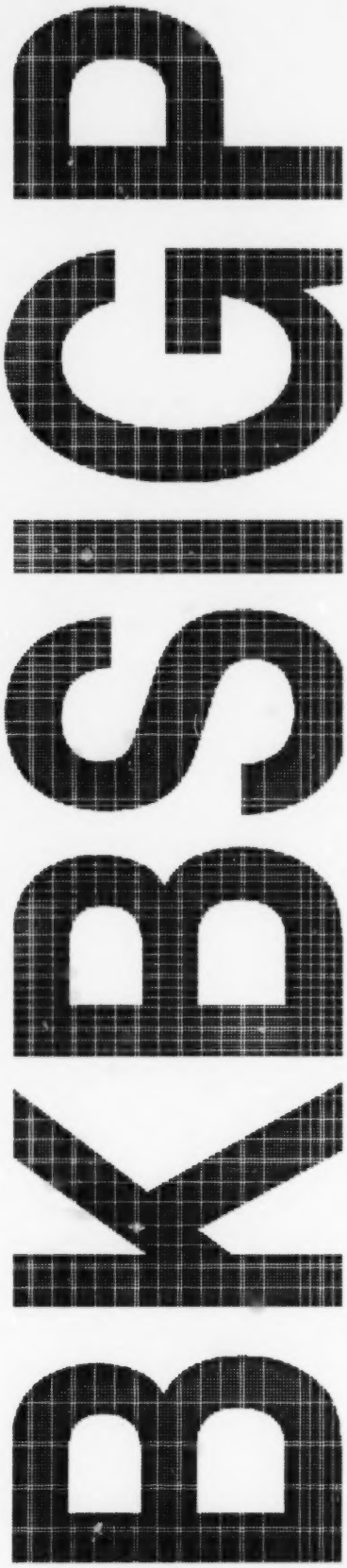


BANK OF BOSTON SCHOOL INITIATIVES GRANTS PROGRAM

The Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program (BKBSIGP) supports school-based programs designed to enhance and improve both teaching and learning in elementary and high school settings. Funded projects are suitable for replication, compliment the school's annual plan, and provide a permanent impact on the school's curriculum. Achieving excellence is the cornerstone of all Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants whether the focus in on curriculum development, teacher in-service training, building relationships with other schools or the local business community, or strengthening parental involvement in education. Programs stress learning beyond the textbook by providing hands-on experimentation and activities outside the classroom. The Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program has awarded over $1.2 million to Boston public elementary and high schools.

Bank of Boston has been a fundamental player in the success of The Boston Plan for Excellence. Not only has the Bank of Boston made it possible to fund and replicate hundreds of successful programs in the Boston Public Schools, but they have also has ensured that the Boston Plan itself will remain in a healthy financial position. In 1992, through the successful sale of stock which was part of the Bank's original gift, the Bank of Boston made it possible to endow the operations of The Boston Plan as well as to provide for additional programmatic needs.

Jeff Graham, Director of Government and Community Affairs at Bank of Boston stated, "Over the past ten years the Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program has awarded more than $1.2 million in grants to some 200 elementary and high schools. Compared to any individual school's budget, these are not large grants. But in terms of funds available for innovation, for change, these grants are very significant. They provide a critical resource for schools striving to improve themselves."

In addition, Bank of Boston has contributed significantly to the ACCESS Program, and has been a long-time advocate for The Boston Plan. The Bank's representation on The Plan's Board of Trustees has been an influential catalyst throughout our ten year history.

BKBSIGP

Samuel Adams Elementary School

FY 93 - $5,625

Principal:

Phillip Marino

Project Directors:

Sara Finnigan

Sharon Hullum

Target population:

School-wide: 300 students

Designed to increase student awareness of water conservation, the Water Wizards Project at the Adams Elementary School was a school-wide initiative that used hands-on experiments across the curriculum to introduce students to the importance of protecting the environment.

Given that the school is only 400 yards away from Boston Harbor, students had direct access to a most obvious experiment site. Science related software on Apple computers, environmental reading materials, films, and videotapes were some of the resources used to teach students how to conserve water and reduce pollution. In grades 1 and 2, students wrote short stories about water conservation, and typed new vocabulary words using "Magic Slate" software; in grades 3, 4 and 5 students learned to use graphing software, wrote and typed stories, and produced the student science newsletter. Students also videotaped and edited science experiments, a science fair and an awards day. At the end of the year, the student production of "Sounds a Little Fishy To Me" was put on for two large audiences.

The Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) and an intern from Tufts University Community Health Program committed to help teach the Water Wizards curriculum. The school collaborated with local neighborhood merchants and community groups to exhibit student water conservation art displays.

To disseminate the project, the Project Directors wrote articles for local newspapers. They also participated in "Lasting Link", a National Science Foundation Grant which paired elementary teachers with scientists working in local industries.

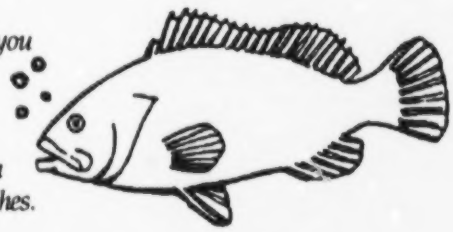
The Water Wizards project will begin its second year of implementation in September, 1993 as the school has been awarded a second Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grant in the amount of $6,016.

From the Samuel Adams Science Newsletter, February, 1993

Water Conservation at Home

By the Students in Grade 3, Room 5

Don't leave the water on.
Don't leave the water on when you brush your teeth.
Take a shower for two minutes.
Don't use too much water.
Don't use too much water when you do your dishes and clothes.
Don't pollute the ocean.
Don't take a mouth full of sea water.
Don't waste any water.
Don't flush the toilet ten times a day.
Don't put any junk down the drain.
Don't leave the water running because it wastes water.
Don't wash your car every day.
Don't drink bad water.
Don't let your dog drink water out of the toilet.
Do not change the fish water tank each day.
Don't let children play with the water.



BKBSIGP

Agassiz Elementary School

FY 93 - $10,720

Principal:

Alfredo Nunez

Project Director:

Elly Mae O'Toole

Target population:

School-wide

"Growthworks"

As one of the largest elementary schools in the Boston Public School system, the Agassiz Elementary School faces a common problem; there has been a tangible lack of understanding among groups, particularly between special education and regular education students, and between children in bilingual and monolingual programs. In many classrooms, there was a narrow range of activities where children from these groups had the opportunity to positively interact. In one attempt to bring the school together as a true community, the Growthworks program was developed in keeping with the school's priorities of thematic teaching and team-building.

Growthworks, a natural science and environmental program, empowered children and teachers to be knowledgeable about and responsible for their environment. Caring for the school environment became an intrinsic part of the school's curriculum. Some of the objectives of the project were as follows: to improve academic skills widely used in life and in environmental studies through a thematic approach; to create and implement a program which both educates students about the environment, and maintains and improves the environmental standards and appearance of the school; to enable students from different educational programs in the school to work cooperatively on tasks which increase harmonious relationships throughout the school; to build school esteem by encouraging every child to develop pride in their own actions recognizing the contributions of their classmates to the project as a whole; and to provide additional forums for parent participation in their children's education.

Many monthly themes were successfully carried out with enthusiasm such as harvesting, plant identification and inventory, weeding, seasonal changes in the garden, working with seeds, investigating the soil and creatures living in it, soil analysis, and bulb planting. Journals were used in classes to enter children's work and to document the progress of the program. Parents participated in both indoor and outdoor activities from assisting in the fall bulb planting to assisting in classes. At home, parents helped with homework and some individual parents gave classroom lessons.

The school collaborated with many other organizations to ensure the success of the program including UMASS/Boston, Boston Greenspace Alliance, Project Learning Tree, Boston English High School, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Boston Partners in Education and Arts in Progress. Also, the Agassiz School donated a large amount of in-kind services including many hours by the Project Director and program participants.

Growthworks will continue in September, 1993 with a $9,220 grant from Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program.

"Seeking a Peaceable Kingdom"

BKBSIGP

William Blackstone Elementary School

FY 93 - $6,750

Principal:

William Colom

Project Director:

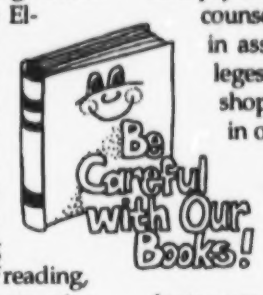
Chandra Minor

Target Population:

Grades 3 - 5

350 students involved

To address concerns over conflict resolution, low student achievement in reading, and reading viewed as work, the Blackstone Elementary School designed the Seeking a Peaceable Kingdom project for grades three through five. The specific goals of the project were to help each child make better choices in resolving conflicts, to foster a love of reading, and to improve reading instruction.



Pre and post questionnaires asking questions such as, "What is peace" and "What are some of the ways you resolve a conflict between you and a classmate" were given to students to assess the impact of the program. Also, journals were kept throughout the year to capture the change in students participating in the program.

Students read selected stories about characters facing problems and conflicts and discussed with their peers how these situations were resolved and how they felt about the characters' response to these conflicts. The stories were selected according to the following criteria: high quality literature; age appropriate interest level; a plot that relates to conflict resolution; and varied ethnic representation. Teacher prepared guides for each book included additional suggestions for classroom and home activities such as writing activities and dramatic arts. Students prepared a creative product for each book. The reading curriculum was restructured to expose students consistently to good children's literature books and role playing and writing activities were implemented. Materials purchased for the program were kept in an available, designated section of the school's library.

Through other funding sources, the school obtained the use of a part-time psychologist, and developed a counseling internship program in association with area colleges and universities. Workshops were held for parents in order to explain the new project, and to invite guest speakers from the community to share their views on conflict resolution. Students were able to take home books to further encourage parental involvement. At the Parent Center, topic discussions about the books were offered.

Staff development was an important aspect of this program. Five third grade teachers (2 bilingual and 3 monolingual) participated in the Educators for Social Responsibility: Conflict Resolution Program for Boston Public Schools and held an in-service workshop for all Blackstone School teachers.

Chandra Minor, Project Director wrote "Conflict resolution and peace have become part of the school's culture. The school has taken an active role in helping students understand how to accomplish peaceful resolutions to conflicts."

BKBSIGP

Brighton High School

FY 93 - $4,560

Headmaster:

Juliette Johnson

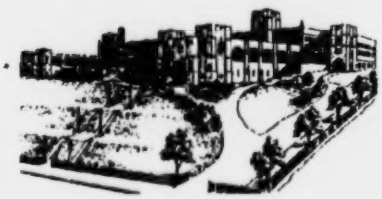
Project Directors:

Joyce M. Campbell

Claire E. Introini

Target population:

School-wide, 500 students

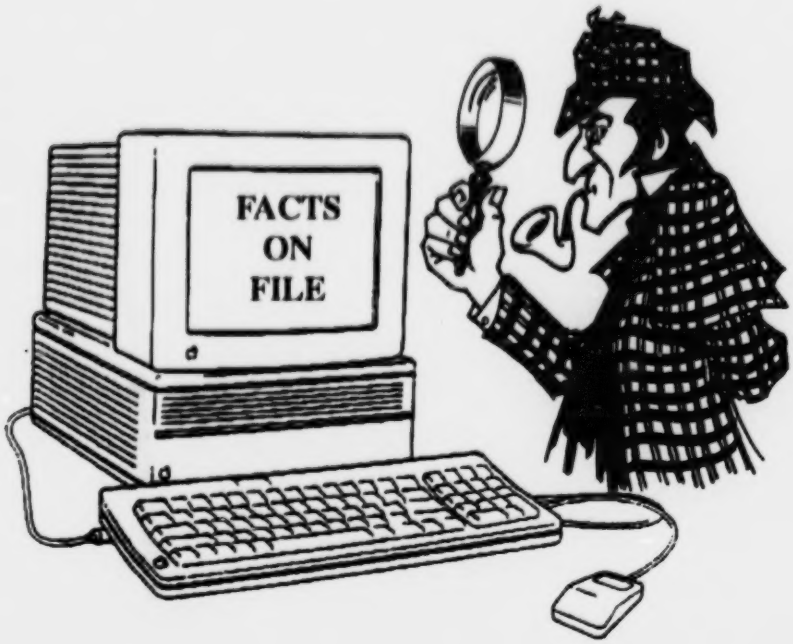


The BIG DIG —for FACTS!

The BIG DIG—*for FACTS!* was developed to expand efforts in the development of interactive learning at Brighton High School. It established an integrated learning environment which enriched and supplemented existing library and classroom materials and allowed students opportunities to interact with the curriculum.

The project created satellite electronic research centers in all five computerized subject-area classrooms. Each center contains traditional reference materials: books, almanacs, periodicals, etc. In addition, centers contain the latest in reference software: the Electronic Encyclopedia and other reference materials on CD-ROM; online electronic library services that include such vast resources as Academic Index, publications of the United Press International, Associated Press, Time-Life, National Geographic, Scientific American, etc.

Some specific objectives of the BIG DIG —*for FACTS!* program were: to increase critical reading and thinking skills; to increase library and research skills; to provide staff development and training in the use of technological equipment; to provide opportunities for teachers to coordinate curriculum and develop interdisciplinary units of instruction; to allow for the exchange of information, cultures, and creative ideas for all students; to achieve a synthesis of the new and the traditional instructional methods to create a more interesting and effective method of instruction; and to increase parental involvement by holding demonstrations and, if requested, training sessions for parents, in order to inform them of new techniques which are being implemented.



Students working independently and in small groups completed a major research project. Their research efforts included a variety of creative student projects such as class presentations (both oral and video), panel discussions, debates, and term papers.

Staff development was a critical part of this project. Participating teachers from different subject areas worked together to design specific curriculum units which incorporate a variety of relevant research assignments.

The BIG DIG—*for FACTS!* will begin its second year of implementation in September, 1993 with a Bank of Boston School Initiatives grant in the amount of $8,500.

Exploring & Sharing Cultural Opportunities in our Neighborhood

BKBSIGP

Carter School

FY 93 - $800

Principal:

Roger Mazur

Project Director:

Abby Marsa

Target population:

35 students

(12 from Carter and 23 from Hurley Elementary)

The Carter School is a comprehensive educational program which was established to meet the needs of students with severe disabilities. Three years ago, the Carter School students had very little opportunity to be integrated with regular education students. Through a number of Boston Plan for Excellence grants, a partnership has been formed with the Hurley Elementary School, also in the South End, where students with disabilities and students without disabilities interact and become friends through various outings during the school year. The project has decreased fears and misconceptions about being close to people with disabilities and has promoted acceptable attitudes toward concepts of normalization.

Students from both schools participated in cultural and social activities such as attending the Boston Children's Theatre at New England Life Hall for the production of "Cinderella", the Lyric Stage for the production of "Scrooge", trips to the Boston Public Library and the Copley Movie Theatre. A number of holiday activities took place at the school, and many performers, such as Tony DeBlois (who is blind and autistic) performed for the group. At the end of each activity, discussions were held with students to get feed back on their experiences. The program was documented by pre and post testing of attitudes and knowledge at the beginning and end of the project as well as records of activities, video taping of sessions and discussions with participants.

Abby Marsa, Project Director wrote "Our cultural and social project has enlightened many adults in our community to the needs of the Carter and Hurley School integration project. For example, The Museum of Fine Arts had no experience preparing a tour for our very diverse group of students. Through lengthy conversations the MFA was able to set up a tour that best facilitated the needs of both groups coming as one. Since our visit, the MFA has expressed an interest in continuing this pairing project with us next year."

The Carter School will receive another year of funding in the amount of $1,100 for the project from the Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program which will begin in September, 1993.

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BKBSIGP

James Michael Curley Elementary School

FY 93 - $8,600

Principal:

Kathleen Armstrong

Project Director:

Patricia Martin

Target population:

Grades 1 - 5: 300 students

"Discovery: Windows to the World"

In response to a concern over class size, integration of special needs students with regular education students, parental involvement, and daily reading time, the Curley Elementary School designed the Discovery: Windows to the World program. Some objectives of the project were: to provide literature experiences for students which include non-fiction sources, especially in science and math areas; to reduce class size; to enhance integration of special needs students with regular education students; to continue to create an integrated curriculum; and to spend a greater portion of each day reading good literature.

The project used literature as a basis for an across the curriculum approach to learning. Students were grouped heterogeneously with regular and special needs students, and class size was reduced for sixty minutes each day to no more than 15:1 during the daily Discovery reading hour.

Each grade level used a year long overall theme such as families, environment, challenges, survival or decisions. Booklists were created and a fall kick off assembly began the school's effort to read one million minutes during the year. Daily reading classes were held and students charted their progress weekly. A portfolio of writing and math activities was kept for each child.

As a result of the program, the school's science fair now has a direct link to the Discovery program. Classes read fiction and non-fiction books and integrate poetry and plays around a science theme.

Pat Martin, Project Director wrote, "Discovery has generated a genuine interest in reading in all our classes. It has also forged some wonderful friendships between regular education students and special needs students. These friendships would never have had the chance to occur without our heterogeneous Discover classes."

Boston Plan staff site visits and evaluation materials found that the program has been truly successful and met all of the program objectives. The Discovery program has been institutionalized within the Curley Elementary School, and will continue in academic year 1993-1994.

The Greenwood Galleon: *Expedition to the Americas*

BKBSIGP

Sarah Greenwood Elementary School

FY 93 - $7,800

Principal:

Isabel Mendez

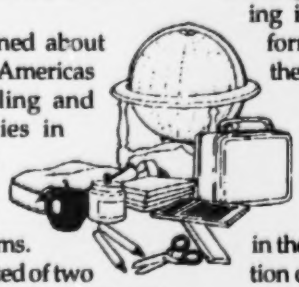
Project Director:

Susan Thompson

Target population:

Grades 4 - 5: 164 students

In keeping with the Sarah Greenwood School's efforts to reform the curriculum and increase mainstreaming of students, the Expedition to the Americas program was developed to further encourage integration among all students and implement cooperative learning strategies across the curriculum.



Students learned about the cultures of the Americas through storytelling and hands-on activities in weaving, pottery, painting, music, drama, writing and other art forms. The project consisted of two phases; students studied a Pre-Colombian culture and today's community. Visiting artists came to the school to share in their expertise and knowledge of the art forms and the cultures studied.

The Mayan culture was chosen to be studied as the Pre-Colombian phase. Latin American artists visited the school and taught children their art forms. Elena Ixcot, a Mayan weaver and spokeswoman for the International Mayan Leagues gave a lecture and demonstration on Mayan Culture, weaving and corn grinding.

Phase two focused on "Our America, Our Community. Students studied a Native American story and then worked on maps of Native American populations in the U.S. and North America. Arts in Progress performed a violence prevention piece, and local storytellers and songwriters performed as well. Poetry, painting, and writing were all results of the artistic exchanges. The focus was on "rediscovering" America today, specifically the cultures and important issues of the school and the community.

The project accomplished all of the goals: students learned about the different Pre-Colombian cultures through legends and folktales; students worked in cooperative learning teams to accomplish Art activities linked to the project; teachers met monthly to plan cooperative learning activities and received training in the use of different Art forms; parents became part of the program as guests and oral historians; students engaged in research and developed questioning skills; and the project incorporated community agencies in the planning and implementation of the project.

LETTER TO THE WORLD

Dear World,

I wish that when get up out of my bed and I open my window, I could see all the colors of the rainbow. I could see rainbows, sun, all the colors of the sky.

One afternoon, I saw a sun setting and I took paper and paint, thinking about you, World. I drew a volcano exploding with it's lava yellow, red, orange, and a piece of blue sky and two clouds, one purple and the other one yellow. Then I drew a sun with Christmas colors and two pieces of pink that mean happiness and a blue moon and brown stars that almost mean the ground. There is orange rain. That means that when the weather is hot the water feels hot on the people's bodies and they take a shower in the rain. I think that the water feels like that when it is in the summer. I dedicate this Painting to you, World. I was just thinking about you, World.

Sincerely,
Clara Diaz, Room 210

BKBSIGP

Joseph J. Hurley Elementary School

FY 93 - $8,820

Principal:

Miriam Hernandez-Spurlark

Project Director:

Virginia Zanger

Target population:

Total Student Population - 394

"Doing Science Together"

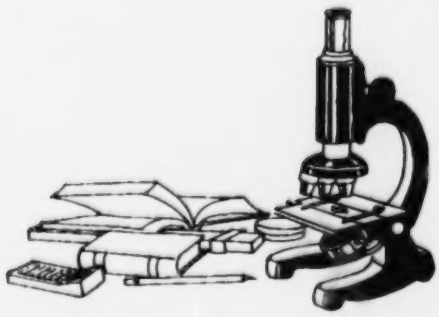
Since 1989, the Hurley School has worked to "build an integrated and unified community of students, parents, and staff through a multicultural Two-Way (Spanish and English) Bilingual program" (Hurley Mission Statement). The success of this model has brought the Hurley staff, students and parents together and has generated a great deal of excitement and motivation. To further cultivate the Two-Way program, the school developed the Doing Science Together program.

The goals of the Doing Science Together project were to develop an inclusionary model of hands-on science education which motivates students, builds collaboration among staff and parents, and provides an opportunity for students from bilingual, monolingual, and special education programs to learn with and from each other.

All students participated in biweekly, integrated science classes using the Hands-On Elementary Science curriculum developed by the Carroll County Public Schools. Curricula were linguistically adapted for two-way bilingual classes. All classroom teachers received science training and support by science consultants and used cooperative learning methods in the classroom.

Students were engaged in a variety of hands-on activities including: working with seeds and leaves (grade 1); metric measuring (grades 2 and 3); construction of a balance to measure mass (grade 3); work with microscopes (grade 4); and testing of rocks for mineral content (grade 5). The activities carried out were organized to introduce and reinforce the scientific skills of observation, classification, measurement, experimentation, and prediction.

The school collaborated with a number of outside organizations as a result of the Bank of Boston School Initiatives grant. The City Mission Society artists worked with students to integrate science topics into the arts, such as writing poetry about metamorphosis and flight. Teachers participated in the Multicultural Summer Institute at The Children's Museum. City Year workers helped in the classrooms, and 11 teachers wrote Vecinos grants based on the grant experience. The Hurley School was also working on the Hands-On Science program which focused on grades kindergarten through three.



Project Director Virginia Zanger wrote, "The project has contributed to a sense of community at the Hurley school. The culmination of the year's science study was a schoolwide butterfly unit, and everywhere in the school, in every classroom, students were observing, reading and writing about, even dressing up as caterpillars and butterflies. The entire school family paraded down Tremont Street in butterfly regalia and the school plans to make this an annual event.

Not Home! Not Alone!

BKBSIGP

Hyde Park High School

FY 93 - $7,625

Headmaster:

Curtis Wells

Project Director:

Patricia M. Tremblay

Target population:

200 Students

A needs survey conducted at Hyde Park High School in 1991 indicated that there was an overwhelming need for after school clubs and courses for all students. Although Hyde Park High offered a sports program, there was a lack of organized clubs and after school enrichment programs. The school staff developed the Not Home! Not Alone! program to address the needs of students and to expose them to activities which would enrich their lives and provide cultural advancement.

Planned activities included the following: weight training; tutoring for mathematics and language arts; the chess club; and two projects which allowed high school students to tutor elementary students at the Greenwood Elementary School. The school purchased new computer software to increase the quality of technology education in the school and worked on establishing an after school computer lab.

Many of the staff volunteered their time to supervise the clubs and after school activities. According to Project Director Patricia Tremblay, "Students' self esteem was raised in helping others—there was a definite cooperative feeling in the work done with bilingual and monolingual students. School became a more pleasant place."

BKBSIGP

Patrick J. Kennedy Elementary School

FY 93 - $6,706

Principal:

Eugene Ellis

Project Director:

Donna Rosenberg

Target population:

School-wide, 330 Students

Project Make a Difference

The focus of Project Make A Difference was to make children aware that they can make a difference in the world; that they have the ability to provide a service to others and thus help society. The project addressed the needs of building self confidence in students, and improving writing and creative skills.

Throughout the year, students produced coloring books which were donated to Boston City Hospital Children's Unit.

Program activities included poetry writing, story writing, and illustration. Students in grades third and fourth graders served as tutors and aides to Kindergarten and first graders while the fifth graders edited the stories. Stories and pictures created by the students were scanned into a Macintosh computer. The final product was original published and bound books which were sent to the hospital. The presentations of the books to the hospital were videotaped and shown to the students.

By the end of the year, each child had worked collaboratively with another child either within their own grade or across grade levels. Most fifth graders learned to use the various piece of technological equipment purchased for the project such as the scanner, printer, binder, xerox, computer, as well as various software.

Six books were completed during the year: A World of Superheroes; A Bus Ride Through East Boston Massachusetts; Find the Hidden Animal coloring book; My Magical Pets; Poetry in Color; and the Just For You coloring book. At least 30 copies of each book were donated to hospitalized children.

Project Make a Difference will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a $3,532 grant from the Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program.

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"Parents As Partners"

BKBSIGP

Josiah Quincy Elementary School

FY 93 - $7,574

Principal:

Bak Fun Wong

Project Director:

Michael DiCaprio

Target population:

135 Students, grades 3 - 5 and 120 Parents

The Quincy Elementary School developed the Parents As Partners program to increase parental involvement through purposeful activities. Parents and their children were involved in literacy activities using IBM P.C. Jr. computers, a fully networked IBM computer lab and appropriate software along with a home component utilizing popular multicultural children's literature.

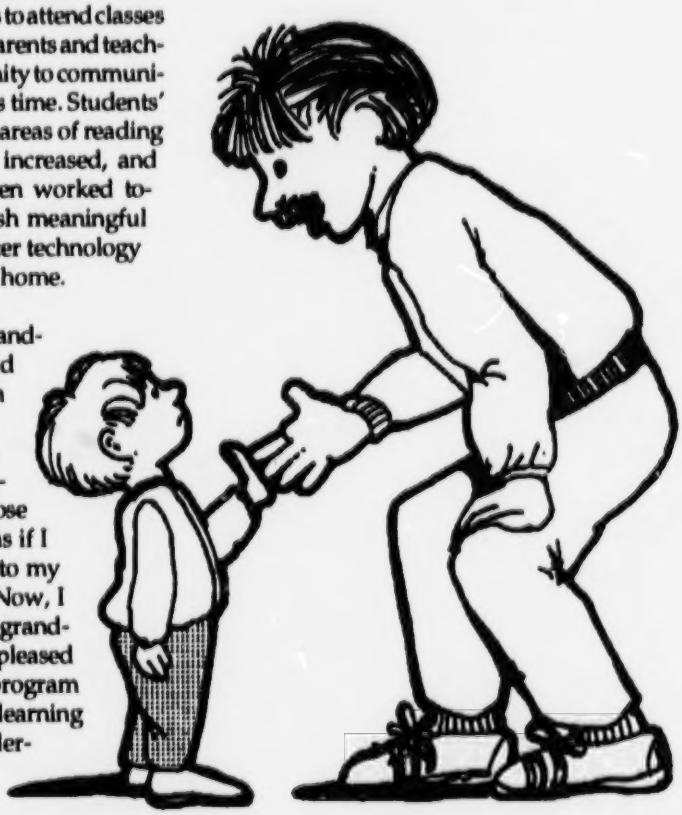
Morning and afternoon classes were given in seven week sessions which provided computer-based, hands-on individualized skill training. All classes were filled to capacity with a good mix of both bilingual and monolingual parent participation. Due to increased popularity of the program, a waiting list was started. Classes had an attendance rate of close to 90%.

Parents became more visible through their efforts to attend classes on a regular basis. Parents and teachers had an opportunity to communicate by virtue of this time. Students' performance in the areas of reading and language arts increased, and parents and children worked together to accomplish meaningful tasks using computer technology during class and at home.

One Chinese grandparent stated, "I had been a teacher in China for over thirty years. When I came (to the program) I had such a close and warm feeling as if I were coming back to my teaching position. Now, I come here with my granddaughter. I am very pleased to tell you that the program proves again that learning can be a very wonderful experience." (English translation of a comment reported in the Sing Tao newspaper.)

Michael DiCaprio, Project Director, wrote, "The project strengthened bonds between parents and the school. It also provided an opportunity for staff, administration and parents to function as a team working toward specific goals."

Boston: Plan staff site visits and observations attest to the success of this important program. It has been institutionalized within the school, will continue in the coming years and can be easily replicated in other settings.



BKBSIGP

Charles Sumner Elementary School

FY 93 - $6,050

Principal:

Joseph Shea

Project Director:

Elaine Capobianco

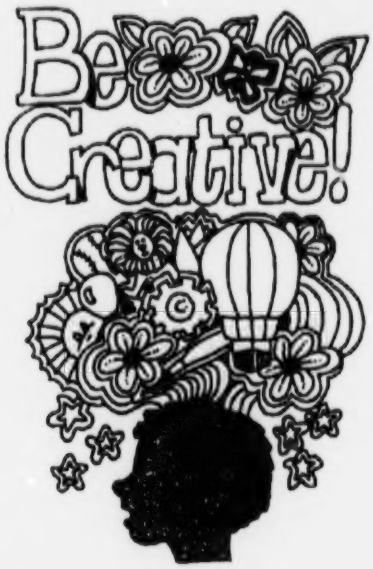
Target population:

300 3 - 5 grade students,

30 parents

"Patchwork of Dreams"

As at many inner city schools, the Sumner Elementary School has a large number of "at-risk" students. These are students who do not possess the motivation to achieve in an academic setting. They behave in a destructive manner; they do not stay focused on a particular task; they do not follow verbal directions. In short, these are the 'problem' students. To encourage these students toward an orientation of what they can do, the Patchwork of Dreams program was developed.



The program was a primary research model program designed to illuminate the roles of diverse groups of people on their road to freedom and to offer an alternative learning environment to the 'at-risk' student. Quilts were the vehicle by which students experienced an interdisciplinary approach to "hands-on" learning, gained understanding of the true value of freedom, and sharpened critical thinking skills.

The year-long interdisciplinary project encompassed quilting, oral history, story telling, geometric manipulatives, fine arts, and writing. The subject matter of the project, The Underground Railroad, was of great interest to the entire school.

Students signed a "Contract for Success" which helped to establish the basic rules of learning. Quilt patterns which hung outside the "safe houses" to identify them to slaves heading North were reproduced. Students were taught basic hand sewing skills and pattern design. They kept journals of the quilt development. Classes were integrated during computer classes and students worked together designing quilt patterns. A school-wide quilt designing contest was designed to create a sense of school spirit.

The culmination of the project was the fifth grade class of 28 students traveling to Okham, South Carolina to meet the students from the middle school they worked with. The Sumner School won a contest for the most quilts entered.

The project instilled a positive school climate based on successful learning and was a great success.

B.E.A.R. Write!

BKBSIGP

Maurice J. Tobin Elementary School

FY 93 - $7,875

Principal:

Janet Short

Project Director:

Jean Egen

Target population:

School-wide

The B.E.A.R. Write! project was a schoolwide effort to recognize the good writing of students and to have fun while doing it. The objectives of the project were: to foster student self-esteem; to enlarge classroom libraries with books in Spanish and English as models of good writing; to increase parental involvement; and to increase staff development opportunities.

Teachers met monthly with literacy specialists from Wheelock College to discuss themes and strategies and to share information and materials. Students wrote in Spanish or English. Monthly assemblies were held as a showcase for student writing. Students were recognized as Teddy Tobin Writers and received a Teddy Tobin pin-on button and a special pencil. Some classes cooperatively developed Big Books, presented them at the assemblies and were awarded a Teddy Tobin ribbon for their effort. Writings were displayed on the bulletin board in the school lobby along with a photograph of the reader. Parents in the Family Literacy Project's ESL and GED classes were also invited to write on the same themes as their child.

Authors visited the school to speak with students about the importance of reading. Staff development opportunities were enhanced by establishing the Staff Resources Center which now contains multicultural literature, videos, Spanish and English children's books for read-alouds and models of good writing, professional literature and book-making materials.

The project brought teachers together to share their writing expertise and to overcome barriers between primary and elementary teachers and between bilingual and monolingual teachers. The Tobin School successfully implemented this project with funding from the Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grants Program for three years, and the school plans to continue with the program in the future.

BKBSIGP

William H. Trotter Elementary School

FY 93 - $7,800

Principal:

Muriel Leonard

Project Director:

Margaret Wirth

Target population:

650 students

"Violence and How It Affects Our Children"

Violence and How It Affects Our Children was developed by the Trotter School to address the very real existence of a culture of violence with which many children live. Using a multi-disciplinary and creative curriculum, teachers, administrators and parents taught students alternative coping strategies that helped to enable them to deal in social situations. The theme of "harmony" was an integral part of the curriculum and the diversity of the student body made this theme a reality.

Critical objectives of the project were to reduce the number of incidents reported among Trotter School students by encouraging and expanding in the school-wide curriculum upon the school motto "We Are A Circle of Friends"; to create a positive school environment that rewards and encourages positive social behaviors; to incorporate the theme "Harmony" into an interdisciplinary curriculum that included literature, writing, language arts, music, art, social science and physical education; and to help parents recognize the many ways that violence impacts on their children's lives and to use alternative coping strategies.

The Trotter School contracted with the Art of Black Dance and Music, Parent and Children's Services, the Poobley Greegy Puppet Theater, and the Violence Prevention Project at Boston City Hospital to provide students with a rich cultural experience and self-esteem and encouragement vehicles to enact change in children's behavior.

The Art of Black Dance and Music provided instruction in role-playing to resolve situations that are potentially problematic. Fourth and fifth graders served as role models and peer advisors for the younger children at the school. A Drug Education Counselor from the Upham's Corner Health Center spoke to students about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and a strong relationship with the Boston Police Department was developed.

Monthly writing themes on topics such as "I respect my neighbor", "I am peaceful", "I have self-control", and "I am lovable" were implemented throughout the year. Parents participated in monthly workshops dealing with issues such as encouraging a child's self-esteem, sibling rivalry, coping over the Summer holidays, and violence on television.

Project Director Margaret Wirth wrote, "The school climate this year has definitely been enhanced by the program. Every member of the school family has made a commitment to reducing the level of violence."

Violence and How It Affects Our Children will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grant in the amount of $5,000.

"Coming Together: A Thematic Approach"

BKBSIGP

Joseph P. Tynan Elementary School

FY 93 - $9,500

Principal:

Maurice Downey

Project Director:

Kathleen Vierbickas

Target population:

420 students

Integrating students at the Tynan Elementary School is a priority, and one approach used at the school has been thematic teaching. The Coming Together: A Thematic Approach program helped the Tynan School to change from using isolated blocks of skills, e.g. reading, math, social studies, etc. to emphasizing developmentally appropriate themes of interest to children in regular and special education.

The Project Director set up the following measurable objectives for the program: to develop a resource center of readily available materials and equipment for teacher lesson planning in relation to themes selected; teacher training in development and creation of materials; instruct children in songs and music related to selected themes; increase parent participation; and to promote multicultural learning by increasing student awareness of the contributions of diverse cultures in relation to the themes selected.

The students wrote in journals and read relevant theme related materials daily. Activities coincided with the various monthly themes: harvesting/seeds; Native Americans and Thanksgiving; December Celebrations, etc. Although only one monthly theme was chosen for the entire school, such as Ocean Life, each grade or class focused on a different aspect of the theme such as whales, sharks or water transportation. The chosen themes provided the basis for introducing and reinforcing skills and building a knowledge base.

Project Director Kathleen Vierbickas wrote, "Theme teaching allows children to learn concepts as a whole instead of segmented, unrelated skills. With each theme comes new and different materials and resources. These bring changes to the learning centers. Children's interest in the learning centers is maintained as they continue to explore new activities and experiences and contribute to their development. Even when a theme is repeated with other classes, it takes on a new scope."

Thematic teaching at the Tynan also helped the school come together as a whole. Since the school is architecturally isolated and divided into pods (grade level areas) separated by floor levels, working on schoolwide themes provided a common interest and dialogue which helped to overcome isolation between grades.

BKBSIGP

West Roxbury High School

FY 1993: $7,910

Headmaster:

Donald Pellegrini

Project Director:

Mary Ellen Bower

Target population:

400 students, grades 9 - 12

"Role Models: The Right Route to Reading"

When students consider themselves to be inadequate readers, they can often develop low self-esteem. The reading deficit can spill over into all content areas and contribute to failing grades and the eventual dropping out of school. At West Roxbury High School, a program was developed to address this need and to encourage high school students to learn to love to read.

Role Models: The Right Route to Reading was designed to develop student motivation and interest in reading through children's literature. High school students became involved with community service and were role models to elementary school children in Boston. WHRS students met two days per week after school for "out in the field" reading experiences at seven different elementary schools throughout the year. Reading materials focused on many different cultures and backgrounds and promoted reading as an enjoyable and essential activity. For teachers, this program provided an opportunity to learn different strategies and techniques to teach reading. For parents, it provided an opportunity to encourage reading at home.

As a result of this program, a community service learning project, "Book Buddies" was initiated. Teachers presented reading aloud techniques using children's literature and assigned high school students to read to younger children. Students learned about writing children's books and discussed the various styles of writing at length. The television production class at WHRS taped sessions of students critiquing books that were read and the entire school viewed the tapes via the Whittle communication vehicle Channel 1.

Project Director Mary Ellen Bower wrote, "Our project WORKS! It's concept is simple but extremely fruitful. Students are motivated to read and are learning that reading is a skill they can enjoy for the rest of their lives. Students are also beginning to realize that by helping others they can also help themselves, their community, and future generations."

The Role Models program will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a Bank of Boston School Initiatives Grant in the amount of $9,540.

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HEART GRANTS

(Hancock Endowment for Academics, Recreation & Teaching)

Supported by John Hancock Financial Services

The HEART Program targets the middle school years when students are facing the critical transition from childhood to adolescence. Funded projects focus on reaching underachieving and "at-risk" students by providing motivating academic and recreational programs designed to help students achieve success, boost self-esteem, and fuel the incentive to stay in school. Academic grants utilize mentoring, individualized instruction, new technology, academic enrichment activities in non-school settings, and other innovative means to help students master basic skills.

HEART has funded over 165 projects in Boston public middle schools. William Boyan, President and Chief Operations Officer of John Hancock Financial Services stated, "It's a necessary program because it provides the bridge for young people between middle school and high school to keep them in school and active and interested in their own education and development. Most business people think about high school students entering the workforce, but the truth of the matter is that the middle years are what build the foundation for future successes; they serve as the foundation for high school."

The HEART program has been working with middle schools since 1985. John Hancock Financial Services has become a major advocate for middle school education in Boston. Two years ago, Hancock convened and hosted the first ever Boston public middle school forum for principals, administrators and teachers. The forum created an important communication link between the business community and school personnel. Discussion revolved around future goals, strategies, and needs within the Boston middle schools and how best HEART can take on the challenges of encouraging excellence during the critical middle school years. This has become an annual event which will continue to provide additional relationships between Hancock and the middle school level.

HEART

Joseph H. Barnes Middle School

FY 93 - $4,702

Principal:

George Moran

Project Director:

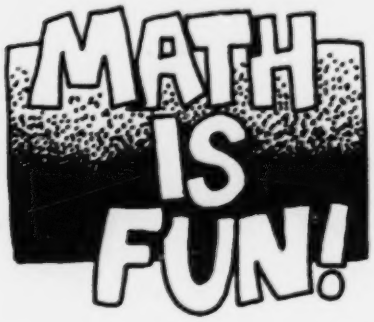
Vincent Caristo

Target population:

150 students

"MathTech"

Upon receipt of the math test scores for 1991, staff at the Umana/Barnes began to discuss ways in which to increase math performance. Parents, students, staff and administrators collaboratively developed the MathTech program to address the need of offering students additional assistance in the area of math during school hours. Students at-risk of failing mathematics were given remedial and enrichment instruction through a combination of computer, calculator, and television technology. Teachers used an integrated, horizontal-across the curriculum approach to develop strategies that involved students in more real-life applications of their studies.



Teachers identified students in need of remediation and/or enrichment. Teachers and students were scheduled in such a way that problem students were brought together from all classes into a math laboratory once each day. Each teacher taught four regular math classes and one math lab per day. Students were scheduled to be removed from only study periods.

Weekly evaluation of the students' progress took place. The number of times a student was assigned to the math lab depended on their progress throughout the year. Enrichment and exploratory work was provided through Apple IIGS computers, appropriate software, manipulatives and calculators. Teachers used the computers not only for instruction, but also for project record keeping, evaluation, scheduling and report generation. The monthly school newspaper kept parents apprised of the projects progress.

Project Director Vincent Caristo wrote, "Many times I had to gently urge students to stop their work as we had run out of time. They did not want to stop, but rather begged for more time in math! Students who had shown little interest or effort in math began arguing with their friends over math problems!"

Students became more enthusiastic about their studies and asked for increased time to work on projects after school. As a direct result of MathTech, many students raised their class average in math above a "D" for the very first time. Teachers found that teaching in an interdisciplinary, thematic manner was effective and rewarding.

The MathTech program will continue in 1993-1994 with a HEART grant in the amount of $5,475.

"Ambassadors to Success"

HEART

Grover Cleveland Middle School

FY 93 - $4,500

Principal:

Mikel Sidberry

Project Director:

Francis Ahearn

Target population:

15 Middle School mentors

72 proteges

All sixth graders face difficult adjustments during their middle school years as they evolve from childhood to adolescence and from elementary to secondary school. The Cleveland Middle School developed Ambassadors to Success to address this critical transition period. Funded for three consecutive years beginning in academic year 1991-1992, the program increased the percentage of students promoted to higher grades and provided alternatives to counteract the negative effect that neighborhood problems and peer pressure may have on students. Mentoring was used to provide necessary academic and emotional support systems.

The project began with the incoming sixth graders (in academic year 1991 - 1992). Two teachers were designated as the lead mentors who worked with adult mentors, who were either members of the Cleveland staff and/or parents, to discuss techniques, methods, and materials needed to implement the program. Lead mentors met with eighth grade teachers to solicit referrals of students for the position of peer mentors. Peer mentors were selected based on the following criteria: recommendation by two or more teachers who had the student during the previous year; a grade average of "C" or better in all subjects during the previous year; the student's genuine interest in participating in the project; and parental permission.

Peer mentors attended two training sessions and were paired with mentees. The students worked together after school two times per week in the areas of English, reading, math, computer skills and other social activities. Special materials, group activities and field trips were designed to enhance the mentoring experience and to help build positive relationships between the students. Both mentors and mentees prepared and participated in an Academic Decathlon competition to culminate the year's successful project.

In the evaluation of the program, the school used report card grades, parent surveys, meetings between lead and parent mentors, and meetings between mentors and mentees. The outcome was successful. Program attendance averaged slightly higher than the average 6th grade attendance. The school saw a reduction of referrals to Special Education and in disciplinary referrals of students involved in the program. The retention rate of students involved in the program was high, and mentee tardiness compared favorably in comparison with the school wide population. Teachers noticed that rapport with students improved beyond a traditional academic relationship.

The third year of the project will begin in September, 1993 with a $4,000 grant from HEART. The sixth graders who began with the program will now participate as mentors during the year.

HEART

Clarence R. Edwards Middle School

FY 93 - $5,250

Principal:

Charles McAfee

Project Director:

John Sousa

Target population:

560 students

"The Rising Stars Club"

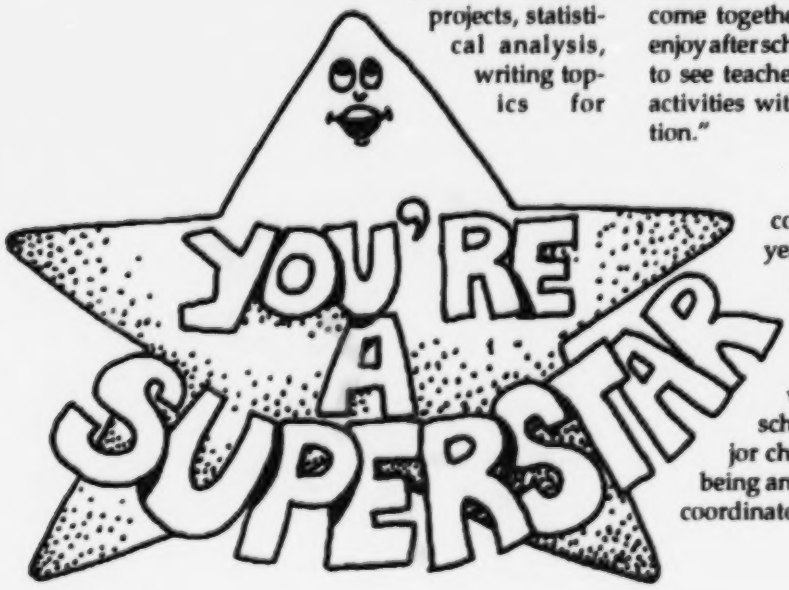
Designed to motivate 6th, 7th and 8th graders regardless of their academic and physical capabilities, The Rising Stars Club was a combination of athletics and academics that helped students to make positive decisions about relevant adolescent issues. Students participated in various activities after school building life long skills in leadership, sportsmanship, team building and a commitment to individual excellence.

The criteria for involvement was arriving to school on time, working toward maintaining a "C" average or better in all subject areas, and developing and maintaining a positive attitude toward school, teachers, and classmates. Students participated in basketball, ping pong, aerobics, flag football and floor hockey at all levels of the program including the advertisement, recruitment, development, implementation, maintenance and management of the programs. Compiled statistics and pertinent information were distributed to the various disciplines for use in students' science projects, statistical analysis, writing topics for writing folders, reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, the school newspaper, and word processing.

Many students participated in these activities for the first time, and all activities provided an opportunity for greater multicultural involvement and understanding of both racial and ethnic backgrounds. Students gained a sense of commitment to their school and the attendance rate for the school was one of the best in Boston.

School staff and administration incorporated the concepts of holistic education and cooperative learning within the school and the classroom. Throughout the school a sense of pride and school spirit was instilled through the project.

Ms. Eleanor Tallent from the Edwards School Parent Council wrote, "The program provided a much needed vehicle to assist in increasing and maintaining a high rate of school attendance in school spirit. Not only was I able to see students of diverse backgrounds come together to participate and enjoy after school activities, but also to see teachers line these athletic activities with classroom instruction."



The project will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a grant from the HEART program in the amount of $5,000. Activities will continue as scheduled, with the major change in the program being an appointed academic coordinator.

"Student Incentive Program"

HEART

Patrick F. Gavin Middle School

FY 93 - $4,650

Principal:

Joseph Lee

Project Director:

Susan Homan

Target population:

535 students

The Gavin Middle School discovered in the school's 1990 - 1991 needs assessment that many students did not meet the requirements of the academic and athletic programs to receive schoolwide recognition. This put students who most needed alternative and extracurricular programs in a non-participatory position which reflected on classwork, behavior, and their feelings of school involvement. The staff of the Gavin Middle School, under the direction of the Project Director and Assistant Principal Joan Leonard, designed the Student Incentive Program to include the entire school population in the development of mental, social, physical, and emotional well being of all the Gavin's students. The specific goals of the project were: to improve student behavior; to improve the atmosphere for teaching; to improve student self-esteem; to improve student/teacher relationships; and to improve students' basic skills.

All teachers attended an orientation at the beginning of the academic year to learn about the Student Incentive Program. Letters were sent to parents and the project was kicked off with a school wide spirit project. Each student received one merit slip per month of school, totaling ten. Students could receive additional merit slips for good behavior, such as participation in class projects, teacher recognition, good attendance, academic improvement, etc. Students received demerits for entering school late, getting a referral or suspension. Students retaining all of their merit slips were rewarded at the end of each quarter with field trips, movies, or vouchers. Students were able to buy back lost merits through positive actions and through the after school tutoring process. Many students who had lost merits in the beginning of the school year began to significantly improve in both academics and socially through the additional attention received after school and through peer encouragement.

Elaine Spellman, Gavin School teacher, wrote about the students having to stay after school, "Academic help often led to time spent with the student discussing positive ways to change the behaviors which initiated the time after school. She noticed a change in attitude of many students who had been angry about staying after school. Many students left being polite, courteous and with a noticeable attitude change. Also, some students increased goals to attain quarterly rewards of honor roll, perfect attendance, and school citizenship awards.

The project successfully increased student attendance by fostering positive self-esteem, increased parental and community participation in school activities, and improved the overall instructional progress.

HEART

Solomon Lewenberg Middle School

FY 93 - $4,997

Principal:

Thomas O'Neill

Project Director:

Karin Taylor

Target population:

535 students

"Bridge It"

The Bridge-It project was designed in keeping with the Lewenberg's philosophy of "Learn by Doing; Do by Learning. Students, faculty, parents and administrators joined together in this program to learn the benefits of teamwork, trust, diversity, enterprise, and achievement. The Lewenberg students had demonstrated enthusiasm for adventure-based learning prior to this program. Bridge-It enhanced that enthusiasm by using Project Adventure games and activities to generate challenging, humorous, unusual, and dynamic learning experiences.

Three full-day sessions of team-oriented, adventure-based learning were held in the Fall of 1992 (one day for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades). Activities requiring varying levels of physical effort were scheduled such as moonball, the Lewenberg eggdrop, the jello drop and Bridge-It. All of the activities required a cooperative team effort. Each cluster established World Records for all physical activities. All students participated as peers along with faculty and parents. Students, teachers and parents developed a video documenting the Fall Bridge-It days.

The project began breaking down the barriers set up by homeroom distinctions, class level distinctions and the many cultural differences which exist in the school. The objectives of the project were to successfully complete team activities and projects, increase positive interaction between regular, special education, and bilingual students at the same grade level, and to increase recognition and interaction between students and faculty in different grades and clusters.

The project culminated in May with the construction of the "Lewenberg Bridge" as teams worked from opposite ends to build a great bridge that met in the middle. The half-day enterprise included a celebration of Lewenberg's diversity, achievements, and new "community" spirit.

Project Director Karin Taylor wrote, "Bridge-It Day impacted the school by providing an opportunity for self-discovery. Students and staff learned how to work together, overcome language barriers, adapt to different learning styles, and directly relate physical activity to the learning process. The project made school a place where students wanted to be, to enjoy learning, to discover new friends, and to feel safe, successful, and proud of personal and team achievements."

Bridge-It will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a $5,724 HEART grant.

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"Academic Renaissance Through Sports"

HEART

Martin L. King, Jr. Middle School

FY 93 - $2,425

Principal:

Stephen Leonard

Project Director:

Paul Connell

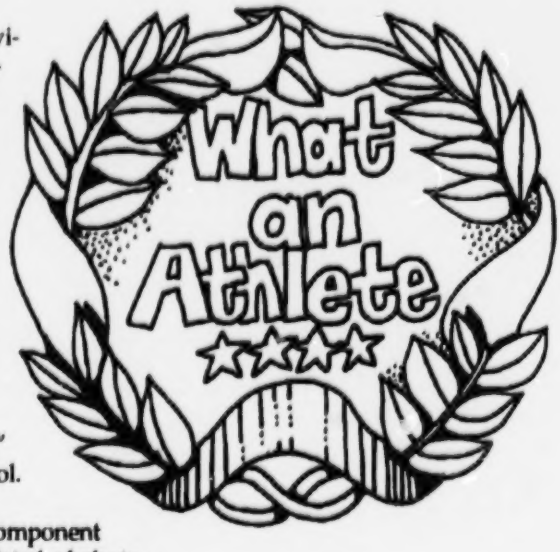
Target population:

550 students

Low academic achievement, high dropout rates, chronic attendance problems, student body discord in socialization and communication, and a general apathy for school and education in general were all problems faced by the King School. In 1990, the ARTS program was developed as a way to improve student self-image, and to provide a link between the enthusiasm for achievement in sports to the academic world.

Students were required to meet academic and attendance standards to participate. Special consideration and outreach activities were targeted toward ineligible students. A tutorial program using computers, counseling, and the use of teacher advisors to closely monitored these students throughout the year. Many students who were unable to participate changed their behaviors to attain eligibility for the program which was reflected in the school attendance figures.

The project activities consisted of a seasonal schedule providing a variety of team sports such as basketball, floor hockey, volley ball, gymnastics, dance, aerobics, and a President's Physical Fitness program. A Project Adventure component was added to further include the "at-risk" members of the school.



The academic component of the program consisted of photo-documentation of the activities, leadership development programs, writing and editing a sports page with the language arts teachers, statistical print-outs in the computer and math classes, and developing interviewing skills with both the winners and the losing team members.

Dramatic improvements in attendance, lower retention and failure to promotion ration, dropout ratio, improvements in reading and math scores, and school spirit were the result of this program. Overall improved student performance and increased parental and community participation helped the King to meet its goals of becoming a united school.

An awards ceremony was held at the end of the year to maximize the importance of participation. Incentive awards were given out to all students. The goals of meeting academic and social needs of students through self-awareness and more positive self-esteem were met. Athletics used as a catalyst to enhance a re-birth of interest in the school was a success at the King.

HEART

Lewis Middle School

FY 93 - $5,524

Principal:

Brenda Jones

Project Director:

Mimi Forbes

Target population:

230 Students

"TEAN Esteem"

The TEAN Esteem project was developed in an attempt to give equal prestige to student participation in athletics, extracurricular activities, and academics. The project fostered teamwork by having all students work toward a common goal of success and allowed Lewis youngsters to master numerous skills. Promoting self confidence and self esteem in all students was a major objective of this program.

Throughout the school year, students participated in learning various skills after school such as craft projects, needlecrafts, dance, and drama. An athletic component which fit into an overall academic/recreational program for students provided swimming, aerobics, volleyball, softball and basketball, as well as other sports. The total school project involved a point system for all schoolwork. Points were received for completed homework assignments, projects, good conduct awards, etc. and were computed by students and maintained on a bar graph chart. Attaining specific point totals entitled classes to certain prizes such as lunch served by the principal, one free night of no homework, an English class in the park, etc.

Teachers met throughout the year to assess the progress of the program and to coordinate efforts. A significant improvement in attendance was evident, as well as an increased ability of students to work in groups and to help one another. Cooperative learning groups were more successful due to the fact that students had more time working together and helping each other. Students were able to integrate what they had learned in the after school programs to their academic subjects, and student/teacher relationships improved through small group sessions.

Project Director Mimi Forbes wrote, "Staff morale increased because of the project. Often, the hub-bub of the school day and the rush to complete academic tasks during the normal time does not allow teachers to work with students in the manner that a relaxed after school pace allows. Teachers were able to see students in an entirely different light - as individuals and children."

Tean Esteem will continue in academic year 1993 - 1994 with a HEART grant in the amount of $5,480.

"Bad Actors Workshop"

HEART

Robert Gould Shaw Middle School

FY 93 - $5,050

Principal:

Edward Marbardi

Project Director:

Stephen Young

Target population:

265 students

In October 1991, an informal assessment was conducted by the staff at the Shaw Middle School which reflected the need to develop an additional vehicle for student involvement in extracurricular/artistic activities. The Bad Actors Workshop was designed to increase positive outlets for the expression of adolescent creativity and artistic ability, to increase cooperative learning and peer leadership in the school, to introduce theater arts instruction, oral presentation skills, and self expression opportunities. The program also focused on creating a more positive school climate, additional image building activities, and emphasized basic skill enhancement.

Both in school and after school theatre arts instruction and presentations took place throughout the school year. Special needs students, regular education students, and "at-risk" students worked together in a positive way to build one another's self images, learn basic skills, and be introduced to Theatre Arts. The adaptation and presentation of three Modern/Classical plays took place. Activities consisted of dramatic skills practice, rehearsal, script development, and costume design. Peers, teachers, parents and community representatives attended the plays. Videos of the three productions were completed and many were distributed to parents.

During the course of the year, students participating in the program improved their grades dramatically and truancies declined. Also, suspensions and failures decreased. All special needs classes participated in the program in both the preparation and performances.

Project Director Stephen Young wrote, "The Bad Actors Workshop had a tremendous positive unifying impact on the school. It helped to integrate special needs, at-risk, and academically talented youngsters into school-wide projects. It brought the school a great deal of positive publicity and respect."

The Bad Actors Workshop will continue in 1993 - 1994 with a $4,625 grant from the HEART program.

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HEART

Phillis Wheatley Middle School

FY 93 - $4,958

Principal:

Michael Anderson

Project Director:

Robert Forbes

Target population:

School-wide

"Wheatley Olympic Triathlon"

The Wheatley Olympic Triathlon was developed to add a cooperative learning component to academic and athletics at the school and to improve the social interactive skills and self esteem of students. The program created an environment where students were encouraged to work together to help each other succeed. By placing students in small heterogeneous groups, achievement increased, social skills improved and personal self-esteem was promoted.

Each class in the school was a team. Teams gained points for academic, athletic and social progress. Points were computed and graphed weekly so that each team knew how they were progressing. Teams were able to redeem points for rewards such as class movies, pizza parties, class trips, etc. Academic points were gained for homework assignments completed, class projects, long term projects, book reports, etc. Social points were gained for perfect attendance, no student tardiness and cooperation among peers. Athletic points were gained for mastering skills in the intramural cooperative program (five sports were offered).

All Wheatley staff were trained in the use of cooperative learning and in the modification of teaching styles needed to implement this type of program.

By offering an after school activity that directed student interest into positive activities and promoted social skills, the Wheatley Middle School was brought together as a community. Project Director Robert Forbes wrote about the program, "Some students who never passed in homework or brought a pencil to school started trying to accomplish (the project) goals for the sake of their classmates gaining points. Peer pressure became a positive reinforcement."

"Wilson Literacy Project"

HEART

Woodrow Wilson Middle School

FY 93 - $3,000

Principal:

Rosalyn Browne

Project Director:

Christine Hill

Target population:

210 students

The Wilson Middle School, with an increasing student population of Haitian immigrants, found they had language barriers and a separate academic program that created racial and cultural tensions. American born students had little interaction with Haitian students and as a result, little understanding of who they were and little or no understanding of the Haitian culture. The Wilson Literacy Project was designed to provide techniques used to enhance cultural literacy to enable students to become proficient in reading, writing and communicating, and to bridge the cultural gaps between ethnically diverse groups in the school.

Through art projects, library research, field trips, storytelling, cultural celebrations and reading and writing activities, students were exposed to various cultures. Planned activities such as a celebration of Chinese New Year and Haitian Flag Day were successful and helped students put into perspective their own experiences with holiday traditions and customs. A program entitled "ALL IN ONE BOAT" provided cultural information to students which sensitized them to cultural diversity. A multi-cultural performance in which students shared their knowledge and understanding with each other took place at the end of the year.

Teachers gained a greater understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity of the school's population and were trained to promote multicultural learning through an interdisciplinary approach. Staff members had the opportunity to participate in workshops and in-service training on multiculturalism, cooperative learning, heterogeneous groupings, and inclusion in education. Cultural consultants worked with teachers to develop and implement a multicultural curriculum featuring music, dance and visual arts. This process allowed teachers to link connecting activities with the regular classroom curriculum through monthly thematic units.

Parents were encouraged to utilize learning-at-home activity kits that focused on cultural diversity, racism and discrimination to further support fostering a positive school-community climate. Limited English speaking and Haitian and Asian parents were provided with assistance from support staff who met monthly with parents.

As a result of the program, a marked decrease in racial conflicts among Haitian and monolingual students was seen. Students demonstrated a greater understanding of and respect for one another. The learning process and overall school climate was improved due to students' positive socialization and cooperation within the classroom.

PROJECT ACTION

PROJECT ACTION

Project ACTION works with Boston public high school students to develop student-run foundations. The project is designed to provide students with a comprehensive educational experience that connects their school experience with the realities they encounter at home and in their school's neighborhoods. In addition, the project aims to recruit high-risk youth and to integrate them into a successful working group with medium-risk and low-risk students. By bringing together students of different academic and social skill levels, an opportunity is created for students who are experiencing academic and/or social difficulties to interact and learn from students who are experiencing higher degrees of academic and social achievements. By bringing together students of different racial, ethnic, and neighborhood backgrounds, the program seeks to build bridges of communication and trust that will be capable of stopping racial, ethnic, and neighborhood conflicts before they begin. In Boston, high school assignments are citywide and often students are not familiar with the school's immediate neighborhood. This program gets the students out into the school's neighborhood and lets them learn about the community.

The Boston Plan for Excellence provides each selected school with a total of $3,500. $1,500 of the funding is used as a stipend for a faculty advisor. The other $2,000, along with a $500 match that must be raised by the students, is intended to provide grants to neighborhood agencies and/or organizations which, in the students' opinion, best addresses the neighborhood needs that the students have identified through the implementation of their community needs-assessment process.

In addition, The Boston Plan for Excellence provides substantial technical assistance including:

- a detailed 24-session curriculum
- faculty advisor training
- monthly school visits

During academic year 1992 - 1993, the three Project ACTION schools were Brighton High School, Dorchester High School, and West Roxbury High School. Over 60 students were involved in the program. Project ACTION schools awarded grants to the following organizations and programs: St. Elizabeth's Hospital Children's Unit; Gang Peace; Codman Square Health Center; and the Path to Progress Program. Through these grants, teens were able to effectively address issues such as teen pregnancy, infants born addicted to drugs or HIV positive, gang violence, high school drop outs, and keeping teens off the streets.

Loretta Roach, current Chairperson of the Project ACTION committee stated, "Project ACTION serves as a wonderful model of how Boston high school students can be involved in community service and peer leadership. This translates to a positive school climate and growing awareness of the needs of their community."

Project ACTION is supported by the Plan for Social Excellence, Inc., and has received in-kind support from Northeastern University.

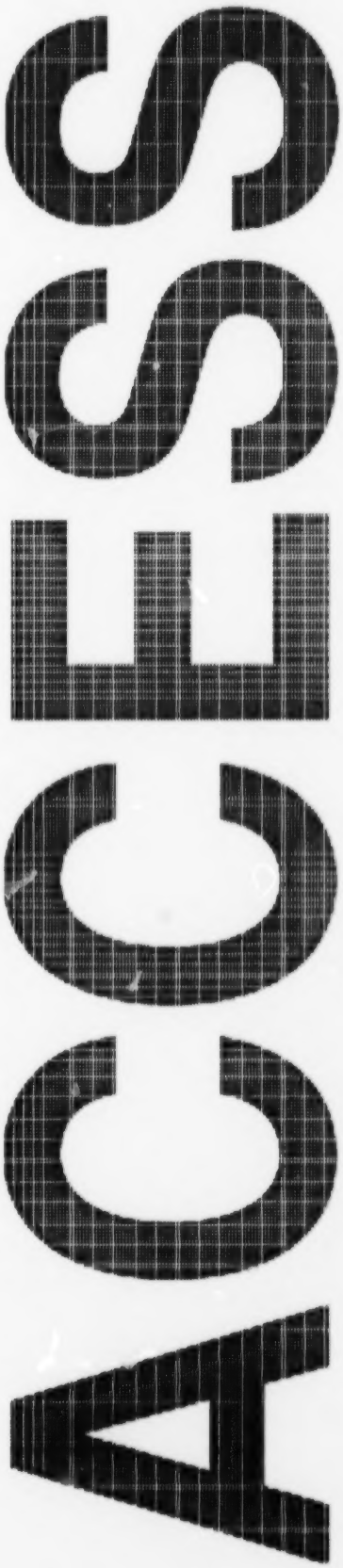
ACCESS

Created with an initial $1 million grant from The New England in 1985, the ACCESS program eliminates barriers to higher education by providing financial aid advising in every Boston public high school, "last dollar" scholarships within our guidelines to eligible students within guidelines to make up the difference between the total cost of attendance and what a student has been able to raise from other sources. ACCESS provides continuing support through college including a monthly newsletter, personal and financial advice, and an emergency loan fund.

The continuing financial and personal support available to "ACCESS Scholars" after they enter college is having a dramatic effect on retention and graduation rates. Of the 1,100 ACCESS Scholars entering college since 1985, nearly 80 percent either have graduated, or are expected to graduate. This retention rate is more than 50 percent higher than the rates for all college students nationally, and higher still than the separate national retention rates for inner city students.

In academic year 1992 - 1993, ACCESS Advisors saw over 1,500 students individually, and another 2,000 in group workshops. ACCESS will distribute over $500,000 in "last dollar" scholarships to both new ACCESS Scholars and continuing Scholars in Fiscal Year 1994. The Program has provided financial aid advising to over 16,000 Boston public high school seniors in their schools and awarded over $1.7 million in "last dollar" scholarships. For every $1 that ACCESS contributes in scholarships, ACCESS Advisors help college-bound students leverage another $8 from other sources of aid.

The ACCESS endowment has grown to over $6 million with major contributions from The Boston Foundation, American Student Assistance Corporation (formerly Massachusetts Higher Education Assistance Corporation), The New England, and more than seventy-five other corporations, professional firms, foundations and business associations.



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